

**CARLETON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON
QUALITY ASSURANCE**

**Cyclical Review of the Bachelor of Humanities Programs
Executive Summary and Final Assessment Report**

This Executive Summary and Final Assessment Report of the cyclical review of Carleton's Bachelor of Humanities programs are provided pursuant to articles 4.2.5.b-4.2.6.a-b of the provincial Quality Assurance Framework and articles 7.2.23.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Bachelor of Humanities programs (B.Hum Honours, B.Hum Combined Honours, Biology and Humanities B.Hum Combined Honours) reside in Carleton University's College of the Humanities, a unit administered by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

As a consequence of the review, the programs were categorised by the Carleton University Committee on Quality Assurance (CUCQA) as being of **GOOD QUALITY** (Carleton's IQAP 7.2.12).

The external reviewers' report, submitted to the College of the Humanities on January 4th, 2016, offered a positive assessment of the programs. Particularly noteworthy is the external reviewers' observations that 'the faculty appointed to the B.Hum programs are, by any standard of assessment, exemplary. Each faculty member is an expert, with an impressive scholarly track record, in a field directly related to the B.Hum curriculum. The faculty are accomplished scholars, but more importantly, they are deeply accomplished teachers.' The Reviewers also added that 'the students [they] met were as impressive as any – articulate, thoughtful, intelligent, knowledgeable, and, not to be under-emphasized, polite.'

Within the context of this positive assessment, the report nonetheless made a number of recommendations for the continuing enhancement of the program. These recommendations were productively addressed by the program coordinator, the Director of the College and the Interim Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in a response to the report of the External Review that was considered by CUCQA on June 14th, 2016.

An Action Plan detailing how, when and by whom the recommendations will be implemented was received and approved by CUCQA on October 12th, 2016.

DATE: 19 September 2016

TO: Dr. John Shepherd, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Academic); Chair
Carleton University Committee on Quality Assurance

FROM: Dr. Shane Hawkins, Director, College of the Humanities

CC: Dr. Wallace Clement, Interim Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Dr. Sukeshi Kamra, Associate Dean (Curriculum, Programs, and Planning), Faculty
of Arts and Social Sciences
Dr. André Loiselle, Assistant Vice-President (Academic)
Dr. Matthias Neufang, Dean, Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs

RE: Action Plan for the BHUM program

As stipulated in the memo of 15 June 2016 from Dr. John Shepherd, the following Action Plan for the BHum program contains 1) details of the steps that the College agrees to take in response the external reviewers' recommendations and suggestions, 2) those responsible for undertaking these steps, and 3) timelines for completing these steps. The Action Plan concludes with this information in tabular form.

The Action Plan addresses the recommendations of the external reviewers as they have been placed in order by CUCQA: 1-3 Curriculum, 4-6 Support and Advising, 7-8 Resources, 9-10 Recruitment and Promotion.

Recommendation 1: Include student representatives, as voting members, on the curriculum committee

Reply from Faculty (26 May 2016): The faculty respectfully rejected this recommendation, noting that students are already consulted on the curriculum annually. Students are consulted through formal and informal feedback mechanisms including in class consultation with faculty, course evaluation comments and one-on-one contact with faculty. Beyond that, student representatives have representation on the Bachelor of Humanities committee of the whole. The faculty also noted that currently no program or department allows students voting representation on curriculum committees.

From the memo from John Shepherd of June 15, 2016: The Committee noted that the College has agreed to take action on the majority of the recommendations made by the external reviewers. The Committee also observed that the College has declined to take action on recommendation #1, regarding the inclusion of student representatives, as voting members, on the B. Hum curriculum committee. The Committee accepts the College's decision. However, given the current context, where the Province of Ontario is stressing the importance of a postsecondary education that is student-centred, the

Committee encourages you to consider other means of engaging students systematically in the development of a cohesive curriculum. We look forward to seeing such considerations reflected in your Action Plan.

Steps to be taken: None, but with regard to student-centred postsecondary education, see further Recommendations 2 and 3.

Personnel responsible: Not applicable.

Recommendation 2: Create an advisory body, comprised of student representatives from all four years of study, to meet annually to review the BHum curriculum and make recommendations to the curriculum committee.

Steps to be taken: As noted in the faculty response to the external report (26 May 2016), currently two students are selected each year to sit in on BHUM faculty meetings. Those members attend meetings and may suggest items for the agenda, forward motions and vote. As part of the agenda, the representatives are asked to report on any concern of the student body. Also, these students serve to transmit the concerns of the student body, including but not limited to those concerning curriculum.

In addition to this process, the program faculty would like to implement the recommendation of the external reviewers as follows. A student committee of two members from each of the four years of study will be appointed by the student body. The committee's task will be to make recommendations on curricular matters to the faculty curriculum committee and the Director in the Winter term of every year.

Personnel responsible: Director of CoH, Curriculum Committee

Recommendation 3: The curriculum committee should consider ways to more fully integrate and connect the curriculum, both within and between required classes, to allow the rationale of curricular choices to be appropriately clear to the students.

Additional comment from CUCQA: With respect to these recommendations on the curriculum, it should be noted that the external reviewers made the following observation: 'we do believe that, at times, the faculty teaching these courses sacrifice some curricular cohesion to satisfy their own scholarly interests and areas of expertise.' This observation is telling in a context where the Province of Ontario is stressing the importance of a postsecondary education that is student-centred.

Steps to be taken: The faculty take seriously the recommendations regarding curricular cohesion within and between required courses. We note that the external reviewers identified the 3000- and 4000-level courses as particular concerns, and some uneasiness among the students regarding their continuity.

This issue will be put on the agenda for discussion in the first BHUM council meeting on September 30. Subsequently, the program Curriculum Committee will be asked to prepare further recommendations and deliver these to the BHUM council in the Winter 2017 term.

In the past the Bachelor of Humanities has met annually as a group to consider ways to encourage greater integration of the curriculum. In our response to the external review we suggested that the faculty revive this process with an annual dedicated meeting at the end of the fall term to identify areas where such integration might be appropriate. At the recommendation of the Director we have instead decided to make curriculum integration a major agenda item during one council meeting every Winter term, beginning in 2017.

Personnel responsible: Director of CoH, BHUM Curriculum Committee

Recommendation 4: The writing tutorial service should be expanded, with the writing consultant (or consultants) available for as many as 40 hours per week.

Comment: a slight correction to previous reports on this matter should be made. Funding for the writing consultant is provided by the Dean's office (fiscal) and supplemented by the College of Humanities from an unallocated fund (not from a designated BHUM fund). Almost all of the funding for the service is provided by the Dean and that is the most likely source of any expansion in the program.

Steps to be taken: CoH will request funding for an expansion of the writing tutorial service.

Personnel responsible: Dean of FASS, Director of CoH

Recommendation 5: Improved coordination of and communication between College and University advisors.

Steps to be taken: Currently the Undergraduate Advisor meets annually with representatives from the Registrar's office and works closely with the various student services provided therein. The Undergraduate advisor will consult with the appropriate staff members (Louise DeCristoforo & Amy Fraser and where appropriate the staff of the Student Academic Success Centre) and provide a report to BHUM faculty at the Winter 2017 term meeting.

Personnel responsible: Undergraduate Advisor

Recommendation 6: Advising by the BHum should be as pro-active as possible, stimulating or requiring students to meet to plan their degrees and that there be made a record of this plan kept by both the BHum program and the respective student.

Steps to be taken: 1) The Undergraduate Advisors will continue to visit all four core courses every fall and strongly recommend that each student meet with them to discuss their progress toward completing the degree; 2) When faculty identify students who are academically “at-risk”, the Undergraduate Advisor will schedule an appointment with the student; 3) All meetings between students and the Undergraduate Advisor will be logged in the student’s file, which students may examine at any time, either independently or in consultation with the Undergraduate Advisor; 4) The Undergraduate Advisor will make a record of the consultation available to the student immediately following the meeting.

Personnel responsible: Undergraduate Advisor

Recommendation 7: The 0.6 LTA should become a tenured or tenure-track position.

Steps to be taken: None. This LTA has been converted into an instructor position.

Personnel responsible: NA

Recommendation 8: Preserve the College of the Humanities’ designated BHum space.

Steps to be taken: We will endeavor to sustain the special status of the administrative and instructional spaces now permanently and exclusively assigned to the program.

Personnel responsible: Director of CoH

Recommendation 9: Carleton University should stress, in its national and international advertisement campaigns, the tremendous work and achievements of the BHum faculty and students.

Steps to be taken: We will continue to lobby the university to promote the program.

Personnel responsible: Director of CoH, CoH faculty

Recommendation 10: Any addition to the BHum programs should be done cautiously and ensure that any increased demand resulting from new programs translate, not into increased student numbers, but increased excellence of those students accepted.

Steps to be taken: None

Personnel responsible: NA

Additional issue:

From the memo from John Shepherd of June 15, 2016: The Committee also noted that the College did not respond to the external reviewers suggestions that the program-level learning outcomes ‘need to be adjusted to match the competencies of the program,’ or to

the observations on the program's learning outcomes contained in my memorandum of January 4th, 2016. Again, we look forward to seeing such considerations reflected in your Action Plan.

From external review: In general, the Self-study should be clearer, in its statement of learning outcomes, of the inherent limitations of a primary text, high culture, western civilization focused program. But rather than see this issue as a need to change the instruction methods of the program, it seems that rather the learning objectives/ outcomes need to be adjusted to match the competencies of the program. The need for some modifications in the Learning Outcomes assessment process, does not affect our basic assessment that the programme fully meets the Provincial Degree Level Expectations, modified to reflect the interdisciplinary character of the programs under review.

From the January 4th memo: Furthermore, the external reviewers also suggest that the learning outcomes "need to be adjusted to match the competencies of the program." They give a number of examples of learning outcomes that should be reviewed. For instance, the learning outcome phrased as "knowledge of the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of the particular academic programmes that make up the Humanities program" seems too broad a goal as to be reasonably attainable. Moreover, the external reviewers could find little evidence of instruction in a number of discipline specific methods such as archival methodologies or statistical analysis that would be basic to disciplines that "make up the Humanities program." While such references to learning outcomes in Section 2. "Learning Outcomes Assessment" of the external report do not appear as formal recommendations, we encourage the College to consider and respond to these concerns.

Steps to be taken: The point made by the external reviewers that the program-level learning outcomes 'need to be adjusted to match the competencies of the program' is well taken. The Director and BHUM faculty met to discuss learning outcomes on 19 September 2016 and have agreed to place this issue on the agenda of a Fall 2016 and a Winter 2017 meeting in order to make adjustments to the outcomes. The Director met with the CUCQA Program Assessment Specialist, Dr. Andrea Thompson, on 20 September for discussion and assistance. A revised set of learning outcomes that takes into account all of the external reviewers' concerns has now been drafted and is circulating among the faculty for comment and revision.

Personnel responsible: Director CoH, CoH faculty

TABLE

Recommendations	Steps to be taken and timeline	Personnel responsible
1. Include student representatives, as voting members, on the curriculum committee.	No steps to be taken.	NA
2. Create an advisory body, comprised of student representatives from all four years of study, to meet annually to review the BHum curriculum and make recommendations to curriculum committee.	Beginning Winter 2017	Director of CoH, Curriculum Committee
3. The curriculum committee should consider ways to more fully integrate and connect the curriculum, both within and between required classes, to allow the rationale of curricular choices to be appropriately clear to the students.	Agenda item for BHUM council meeting on 30 September 30 2016 . Curriculum Committee report to BHUM council in the Winter 2017 term.	Director of CoH, BHUM Curriculum Committee
4. The writing tutorial service should be expanded, with the writing consultant (or consultants) available for as many as 40 hours per week.	Academic year 2016-17: CoH will request funding for an expansion of the writing tutorial service.	Dean of FASS, Director of CoH
5. Improved coordination of and communication between College and University advisors.	The Undergraduate advisor will schedule consultations with the appropriate staff report to BHUM faculty in the Winter 2017 term.	Undergraduate Advisor
6. Advising by the BHum should be as pro-active as possible, stimulating or requiring students to meet to plan their degrees and that there be made a record of this plan kept by both the BHum program and the respective student.	Immediate implementation, Fall 2016: 1) The Undergraduate Advisor will visit all four core courses every fall and strongly recommend advising appointments to students; 2) When faculty identify students “at-risk” the UA will schedule an advising appointment; 3) All meetings	Undergraduate Advisor

	will be logged in the student's file, which students may examine at any time, independently or in consultation with the UA; 4) The UA will make a record of the consultation available to the student immediately following the meeting.	
7. The 0.6 LTA should become a tenured or tenure-track position.	None, the LTA has been converted into an instructor position.	NA
8. Preserve the College of the Humanities designated BHum space.	Ongoing: We will endeavor to sustain the special status of the administrative and instructional spaces now permanently and exclusively assigned to the program.	Director of CoH
9. Carleton University should stress, in its national and international advertisement campaigns, the tremendous work and achievements of the B.Hum faculty and students.	Ongoing: We will continue to lobby the university to promote the program.	Director of CoH, CoH faculty
10. Any addition to the BHum programs should be done cautiously and ensure that any increased demand resulting from new programs translate, not into increased student numbers, but increased excellence of those students accepted.	None	NA
Additional matter: adjustment of Learning Outcomes	Recommendations for changes in Fall 2016 and Winter 2017 meetings.	Director CoH, CoH faculty